



Report 10.74  
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Committee Catchment Management  
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## Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme

### 1. Purpose

To present to the Committee an update on the Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme (PWBP) funding and governance.

### 2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report do not trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

### 3. Background

The PWBP arose from a joint regional council application to the MAF Hill Country Erosion Fund (HCEF) towards the end of 2008. The successful application was a major boost to this aspect of regional council activities and a total of \$653,000 was allocated from HCEF for a period of four years. Regional councils committed annual cash contributions totalling \$170,000 to match the Government's contribution. Prior to this new source of funding the PWBP survived on \$60,000 per annum and a large degree of in-kind support from Plant and Food Research

A condition of the MAF funding was that a more formal governance structure be set up to manage the programme during this funding period, and to secure long term funding for the programme. MAF has provided additional funding to facilitate this process.

### 4. Progress to date

A working group comprising regional council staff, Plant and Food consultants and MAF, was set up to identify a suitable structure and identify suitable candidates to be part of the ongoing governance of PWBP. This group met between December 2008 and June 2009 and proposed a Trust as the preferred governance structure. This group also canvassed and approached a number of people to see if they were interested in becoming Trustees.

By June 2009 a group of highly qualified people had agreed to be involved. The members of the trust are Bill Kain (AGMARDT) – Chair, Bruce Wills (Federated Farmers), Tom Mandeno (ex Meat and Wool NZ), Garth Eyles (Land Management Consultant), Trevor Freeman (Gisborne District Council), Nicola Shadbolt (Massey University), and Tanira Rangi (Massey University). The group is serviced by Plant and Food which has the contract to supply the research. The lead scientist is Ian McIvor.

At this stage Grant Cooper (Horizons Regional Council), David Cameron (Greater Wellington), Loretta Dobbs (MAF) and Stuart Berryman (Plant and Food Research) have been asked to continue to be involved to assist the governance group on technical issues.

The Trust is still to be formally set up, however a Business Plan has been developed which identifies regional councils as the main client, owner, distributor of materials, as well as a major funder. A regional council trustee will be sought to recognise this considerable level of commitment.

## **5. Communications**

The contract with MAF sets out the requirement for a number of newsletters. In addition to this schedule, articles provided for Rural Focus and made available at Akura Conservation Centre to report progress to the wider community.

## **6. Recommendation**

*That the Committee:*

- 1. Receives the report.*
- 2. Notes the content of the report.*

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission by:

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**Attachment 1 – Project Summary: Poplar and Willow Breeding Programme**